



WRETCHED EXCESS ISSUE

Head Dude
Jim "Big Kahuna" Testa

Righteous Underlings

Bruce "Steppenwolf" Gallanter
John "Summer Of Love" Lisa
Mike "Like, Heavy, Man" Aiello
Howard "Baron Of Love" Wuelfing
Yosi "Deathtripper" Levin
Mark "Siddhartha" Fogarty
Dawn "Au Go Go!" Eden
St. Lords of the Holy Headbangers
Dave "Bagelkiller" Run-It
John "Groovy" Crawford
Mike "Humongous" Farrar

Anything without a by-line is probably by the Editor.

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Chuck Eddy For President In '88!

"WRETCHED EXCESS!" my friend Larry Grogan would growl in disgust. "Total 70's slob-rock!" That was a few years ago, when bands with shoulder-length hair specializing in musical self-indulgence were the exception, and mop-topped 3-chord 60's revivalists made "the scene." Today, like it or not, we're in the middle of a full-blown comeback of early 70's post-hippie excesses - bands dedicated to obliterating traditional "pop" song structures and given, by & large, to looking like something from a Dennis Hopper movie circa 1972. From the Lower East Side's legion of "noise bands" to the Avant-guitar weirdness of Phantom Tollbooth, to Das Damen's post-psychedelic freeform meltdowns, to the out & out 70's mall-rock of Raging Slab, to the jazz/punk/prog-rock fusion coming out of SST and Homestead, music is looser, freer, and more unpredictable than it has been in changes. Of course, bands are slovenlier and more given to ear-bursting volume, endless solos, and sloppy half-baked album ideas than in recent memory too. That was the idea then, and like all rock 'n roll, it's seem to come full circle. That means the good news is that a Punk Rock revival is probably just around the corner. The bad news is that Disco doesn't have to make a comeback; it never left, and if you check the charts closely enough, you'll see that it's in fact more popular today than it was in the heyday of Saturday Night Fever. Win a few, lose a few. The last time the Yankees won back-to-work World Series was in the 70's too, y'know...

Vol. VI. No. II
June/July 1987



by Jim Testa

Somewhere between the overabundant teenage energy of hardcore, the dizzying complexities of jazz fusion, and the bludgeoning intensity of the Lower East Side "noise" bands, Phantom Tollbooth has emerged as a pleasantly solid and stable presence on the New York club scene. They've managed to release three records - an EP, 45, and now an album - on Homestead without either breaking up or signing to SST, and will be touring throughout the summer.

PHANTOM

GAROMP
ARUMPH

We finally caught up with Phantom Tollbooth's Dave Rick outside CBGB just before the band performed a raw and blistering set opening for the Butthole Surfers. Just a few weeks earlier, the Tollbooth played the same club on a bill with Big Dipper that parlayed its uniquely twisted and ever-evolving jazz-influenced prog-rock into a much mellower and flowing ensemble of unpredictable rhythms and intensely mutilated guitar and bass sounds. Phantom Tollbooth can do that - jangle your nerves into caffeine frenzy one night and induce psychedelic dreams another. So the first thing we asked Dave Rick, guitarist and one of the two lead vocalists in the group, is how he sees Phantom Tollbooth evolving, and how he thinks the band has changed since its inception two years ago:

Rick: Mostly I just think it's a matter of us becoming better as time goes on. It's certainly a little easier now. We have more money for equipment, money for rehearsal space, all that helps...When we started, I had more songs than Gerry (bassist Gerard Smith), so I sang more. On the new record [One Way Conversation, the band's first full album and third release on Homestead Records], I do five songs and Gerry does four, so we're definitely sharing more of the vocals.

Q: Do you write the songs you sing, and Gerry writes the ones he sings?

Rick: The lyrics. Musically we just get together and see what works, each writing our own parts. It takes fuckin' ages for us to write a song. We're working on some songs right now, so we'll have some new songs to play out when we tour this summer, and it just takes so long.

Q: Would you agree that your music is challenging to the listener? It's not the kind of music you can just play in the background and ignore.

Rick: I'd like to think so, because it's not incredibly centered...it's not like we're into any big jazz thing or anything, but, even though I'd like to work in all forms of music, the music we're doing now isn't really like pop songs, it's not verse/chorus. To be absolutely honest, when Gerry and I play something together, we're not necessarily playing the same notes. Sometimes it's a mathematical thing that works out musically, or sometimes it's just what sounds good...sounds good to us, anyway. I don't know how it sounds to anybody else.

(Continued on next page)



Jon Coats



Dave Rick

The Jersey Beat Interview TOLLBOOTH



PHANTOM TOLLBOOTH

Gerard Smith



Q: The new album has a lyric sheet for the first time. Do you think lyrics are important in a band like yours, that tends to play so loud on stage anyway? I mean, you really can't hear the lyrics most of the time anyway.

Rick: Yeah, well, it's a little of both... In rock 'n roll, it's not like you're gonna play out and people will hear the lyrics anyway so in a way... I mean, like, Ira Kaplan from Ya La Tengo, half the time he doesn't even have lyrics until he has to record the song. Most of the records people listened to in the 70's didn't have lyric sheets. So... Still, I think our lyrics are good, more so now than on our first record [the 7-song Phantom Tollbooth EP]. I don't like any of the lyrics from the first record anymore at all. They were written a long, long time ago. But these are pretty good lyrics.

Q: Do your lyrics come from any tradition or particular influence? It's not like your songs tell stories like Bob Dylan, for instance...

Rick: I'm actually working on some new songs now where I rhyme things, first time in a long time...I don't think we tell stories, no. Gerry does here & there because some of his things are sort of autobiographical. Gerry could probably tell you what certain things mean in his songs. I couldn't. My things are just too confusing, even to me.

Q: Some of the newer songs, especially Gerry's, do seem more accessible, maybe more pop-oriented?

Rick: Some of them are, they were written that way on purpose. As far as lyrics go, I like playing with words a lot. It's a lot of goofy puns and shit... But it's important to me. I think that kind of thing has meanings of its own.

Q: There seems to be a lot of 70's influenced bands around all of a sudden. Bands bringing back things like early Zappa, progressive rock... Do you feel influenced by any of those things?

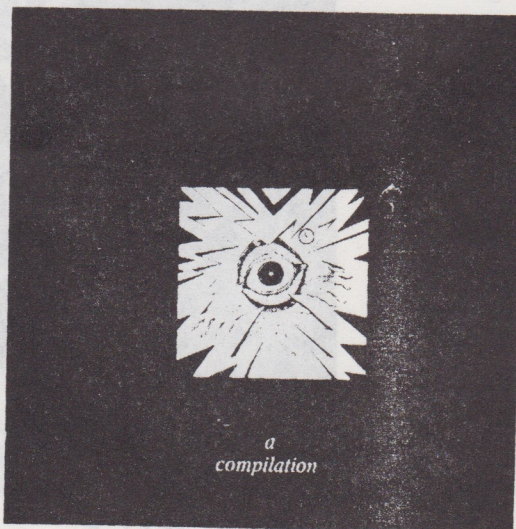
Rick: It's not so much any influence, it's more just all of us having a lot of tolerance...Gerry will suggest something, or I'll come up with a riff, or [drummer] Jon [Coats] will experiment with something...Mostly we just get bored real easy, so we're always fighting, 'No, let's not do that again!' That kind of thing. We just like doing things that are fun for us. We like contrasts, contradictions. And I think we're just trying to relate things, y'know? I mean, music can do physical things to you. And that's what we're trying to do.

"CRAWLING FROM WITHIN"

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SPACE NEGROS
THE LEMONHEADS
(TWO TRACKS)
CLASSIC RUINS
THE BROOD
(TWO TRACKS)

"It Is Pretty Good" — Sue Max — Important

"I Didn't Get The Tape"...But it Sounds Good....I'll Take....!" — Michele Mena — Pipeline

DISTRIBUTED BY: Important, Kaleidoscope, Twin City Imports, Pipeline, Swingline, Imaginary. **X DUTCH EAST**

IN EUROPE BY: Semaphore.



by Howard Wuelfing

RAGING SLAB. Shall I come to tender praise or damn them out of pure curmudgeonly spite? Lie cunningly to lend credent to their own myth-making or turn it all to sooty slush with cold, accurate reportage?

Well, in truth I do believe Raging Slab make fuggin' GREAT modern rock'n'roll. A big surprise. Effectively uncategorizable. It's fulla piss n vigor n guts n gall. They play hard, heavy rock without sounding like a metal band. I appreciate the humor that's so obvious in their debut LP Assmaster and even more I enjoy that it never lapses into mere low comedy.

In truth, Raging Slab do drink an astounding amount of brew and at every available opportunity. This could be attributed to the presence of two Western Pennsylvanian lads, drummer Tim Finefrock and singer/guitarist Jag Slab in their ranks. I once roomed with an old neighbor of Jag's and he would regularly suck down a six before lunch, another before dinner, and a good ½ gallon in the course of a quiet evening at home. Those Pennies can soak it up! At times, this causes problems. When the last vestiges of social inhibition have been stripped away, the Slabs have been known to (1) get in public food fights with influential FMU jocks (2) scrap with Buy Our Records labelmates like Wussy Galore (3) bait Gerry Cosloy on PATH trains late at night (4) sign record deals with half-assed trend-conscious Manhattan undie labels like Natural Enemies (5) listen to my dad tell Pollack jokes (my ma and Jag are both of that persuasion).

There are four pretty permanent members of Raging Slab this year: Besides Tim and Jag, Elyse plays slide guitar and Alec is on bass. Elyse helped found the band a couple years back along with a girl bassist and drummer. Alec recently joined this crue having played in various D.C. punksy bands.

The Slab made a buncha neat demo cuts, one of which came out on THE BANDS THAT ATE NEW YORK compilation. Then Buy Our Records signed 'em up, sent them off to record at the House Of Music on 24 track, and Assmaster was the result: comes with a dandy comic book, kinda like Swamp Thing Meets Budgie. In support of the LP they have toured a zillion backwater spots down South where they ran into a surprising number of authentic fans - knew words to all the songs an' everything.

I've asked the gang to state their intentions on a number of occasions and the most coherent thing they've come up with is: doing for 70's "mall-rock" what punk did for garage music. And in my opinion, they've done damned well.

RAGING SLAB



PARTNERS IN FUNK

PARTNERS IN FUNK

"Wastee Days" Cassette

Bird o'Pray, Box 39, Trenton, NJ 08601

What we have here is a collaboration with 2 Birdoprayer groups - Partners In Wonder and Funkophobia, both of whom have had their tapes reviewed here before. There are 3-5 people on each piece, with odd names like Droid (synth, bass), Dean Bruni (most of the lead guitar), Jeffty (perc & bass), Mike Stand (most vocals) and the ever-present Andrew Weiss (keyboards & engineering).

Like Funkophobia, it's hard to believe these guys are from Trenton. I hear some Pink Floyd-ish ideas, Eno-esque production, and even some British-sounding vocals. They certainly do make the most out of the few instruments they utilize. "We Can Deliver It" consists of only a somber, cyclic keyboard melody, believable gothic vox, sparse suspenseful bass hypnosis, and a well-selected two-note perc pan across the audial horizon.

Vocalist Mike Stand sings only one word ("Sounds...") repeatedly on "Chapter 3." More rich gothic-echoed vox and a cool uptempo bass line provide the melody. Nice to hear someone creating a fine forward thrust heartbeat with a drum machine on "Sleepless Nights;" some distant darkness ala' Joy Division but more like that poetry & sonics piece on the new U2 LP. Very memorable.

Sounds like Birdoprayer brethren Cleft Palate have a direct influence on the scariest ditty here, "Conducting An Investigation." Droid's fuzz bass is so thick and squealing, it's like coating your brain with molasses. Jeffty's voice is just about as sick as that other nasty-toned dude, Boy White! The other side of the tape has a 23½ minute epic of grand subtlety entitled "Sloth." Occasionally altering, yet ever evolving and continually altering the textures, the piece has a serene majestic quality, not unlike the ultimate space unit, Gong. There is this distant fear lurking thru the cracks -- the guitar comes spiraling in, telling stories with psychedelic abandon... Check out this well-needed island of escape.

- Bruce Lee Gallanter

CROSSFIRE CHOIR

Crossfire Choir, LP & Cassette

Passport

New Brunswick-based Crossfire Choir has turned out a slickly produced package of hooky pop material. Occasionally it misses fire but for the most part, it works. One song starts off with a Who-like guitar barrage but Crossfire Choir doesn't seem all that derivative (I also heard a trace of Squeeze). The band has found its own voice and the result is pretty decent mainstream material. Steve Lillywhite's production includes a couple of nice touches, like actual choirs of backing voices and between-track interpolations. The cassette includes two songs not on the LP.

- Mark Fogarty

PHANTOM TOLLBOOTH

One Way Conversation, LP

Homestead

Those of you who like your music to follow a certain style or fit into a certain form might as well not bother to check out One Way Conversation - it's bound to be way too abstract for your ordered tastes. A zippy frenetic exercise in innovative improv, this release manages to pack just about everything into its songs save the kitchen sink (and if there were a musical way to do it, I'm sure it would have been done.) The timing is constantly changing, and yet the chords & rhythms themselves are put forth with quickness & intensity. Plenty of speed here to delight any hardcore fan, but the intricacies of the music are bound to appeal to a lot of others as well. After each listen you'll pick up new pieces in the songs that you missed the first time. One Way Conversation might not go by all the rules as many of us perceive them to be for new music releases, but then again new music got that way by breaking them in the first place.

- Carol Schutzbank

CHAIN GANG

Mondo Manhattan, LP

Lost/TwinTone

Chain Gang are rude & lumpy. Apparently anti-capitalist. As far outside the mainstream and probably most even-marginally profitable underground sub-cliques as possible. A genuine fuggin' anomaly. Mondo Manhattan is well nigh indigestible, with exploding punk guitars and staggering funk rhythms, evil-sounding machines and perplexing spoken commentary. The jacket advertises a home video! The LP has tracks recorded as far back as 1976 (!) tho the bulk were cut in '84 - '87. Did Lost put this out on a dare? If so, I'm glad - it's like dropping a hunk of lead into a pool of crystal lily pads - what a beautiful tinkly shattering! And oh, what a thunk when it hits bottom!

- Howard W.

BOB PFEIFER

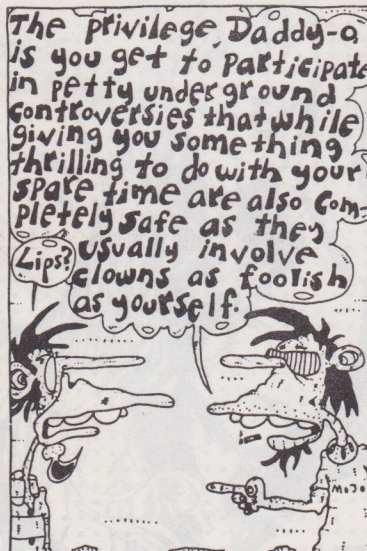
After Words, LP

Passport

An auspicious solo debut from the leader of Human Switchboard. After Words is soft but never gentle, lyrical but never sappy, and catchy but never formulaic. Pfeifer takes a folksy approach, leaning towards grassroots rock n roll, that will remind some listeners of Dylan, although to me it's closer to Lou Reed. The songs are clean - no overblown production, grandly orchestrated choruses, or heavy instrumentation, but sharply written with plenty of hooks to grab your attention. Half sung/half chanted, the lyrics are honest, perceptive, and carefully crafted, like the music to which they're set.

- Carol Schutzbank

New & Local



© John & Lisa Crawford



If I didn't tell you that the Electric Love Muffin were from Philly, guaranteed this scruffy quartet of Temple undergrads would have you thinking Minneapolis: The white-noise intensity of Husker Du, the post-hardcore double-guitar whammy of Soul Asylum, and the garage-punk hootenanny eclecticism of the Replacements all come to mind whenever the Muffin start to yowl. But this combo transcends comparisons. They are in a class by themselves, the real McCoy. In a year or two, other bands will be compared to them. Guaranteed.

Not that the Muffin is a new band. In fact, their soon-to-be-released Buy Our Records LP, Play-Do Meathook, was recorded back in 1985 and just now finding a home. Y'see, as might be expected with any bunch of yahoos who name themselves The Electric Love Muffin, there's a certain intrinsic lack of seriousness afoot here, a characteristic responsible for the band's early rep of being terribly inconsistent on stage. Recently, though, they've matured, or gelled, or whatever it's called when a band, no matter how inwardly goofy, suddenly reaches that point where they can step onto a stage and play like gods no matter what the circumstances. I recently saw them three times, in front of three very different audiences, in wildly varying circumstances: At a CBGB hardcore matinee, at a godawful Dirt Club Tuesday night showcase, with a hostile soundman & an indifferent crowd, and in front of a packed & appreciative Saturday night throng at Maxwells. Three shows, three amazing performances.

'Gos they really do make a wunnerful racket, these guys, cantankerous country-thrash mixed with blood-racing hardcore spew. The Muffin isn't a hardcore band by any means, but they couldn't exist as they are if they hadn't learned all of Hardcore's lessons about smelting speed, energy, and hooks into white-hot ingots of sound. They're fun to watch too: Bassist Brian Campbell taking 4-foot pogo leaps while pumping furiously melodic bottom into the mix; guitarist Butch Lauer, a vision of James Dean cool in denims & white tee, sucking Winstons and ripping ear-bleeding riffs out of thin air; Frank Campbell, Brian's big brother, a manic, sweating rhythm machine behind the drums; and lanky, red-headed Rich Kaufmann in front, strumming like a madman and spewing lyrics every which way, occasionally even into the mike.

Nightmare On Electric Love Muffin E.L.M. Street

For added enjoyment, stick around long enough to catch the boys shift into hyperdrive for their nifty covers (where that certain lack of, uh, seriousness tends to rear its silly head again): "Venus," recently re-popularized by Bananarama, gets pummeled into a bloody pulp at breakneck tempo, "Norweign Wood" gets injected with a massive dose of sonic Crack, and Deep Purple's hoary old "Highway Star" goes supernova in a blinding flash of spazzout mosh. These guys don't revive the 70's; they drop a neutron bomb on the whole sorry decade and leave nothing standing but a stack of Peavey amps and a glorious din. They are The Electric Love Muffin. Accept no substitutions.

- Jim Testa



by Pattie Kleinke

HUGO LARGO
drum, LP
Relativity Records



Bang the 'drum' oddly

One night, in Fall, '83, as we sat around in a friend's apartment dusting her cat with flea powder and holding our weekly "what the fuck are the words of 'Shaking Through' and do they really apply to my life?" session, she told me she was auditioning that Saturday for a band that Tim Sommer was putting together. He wanted the concept to be unique: 3 female bass players and a singer. Well, she wound up devoting all her time to art school, and Tim Sommer's concept turned out to be Hugo Largo.

Almost four years later, we get the first vinyl from Hugo Largo, a "band" (and I use the term loosely) that has no drums, no keyboards, and the very rare guitar. A live show is more performance art than concert. They've also been referred to as a "chamber ensemble."

Four talented people weaving magic songs out of simple bass, violin, and the human voice. Mimi Goese's voice is an extraordinary instrument. On drum, it's been somewhat refined for the masses. During performance, she screams, whispers, gasps, and jumps & falls octaves like it was the easiest thing in the world. I found it incredible when Michael Stipe, co-producer with Hugo Largo on drum, told me that she had no classical voice training. She has, rather, been pursuing aspects of dance, having performed around New York for the last three years. Onstage with Hugo Largo, her performance is sensual and childlike and dares you to look away, 'cos she knows you can't.

Adam Peacock, who plays bass and guitar, was born in London and moved to Los Angeles in 1978. His first band, upon coming to NY, was Cool It Reba. In 1985, he joined Hugo Largo.

Hahn Rowe is a musician and recording engineer who has worked with Bill Laswell, the Golden Palominos, Live Skull, and Wiseblood. Starting as Hugo Largo's sound engineer, he now plays violin in the band.

Tim Sommer, who first came to my attention as the manic deejay of WNYU's "Noise: The Show," NYC's most classic hardcore radio show ever, seems to have worked in every aspect of underground music. As a journalist, he wrote the "American Underground" column for Trouser Press, as well as contributing to other 'zines and magazines. His band, Even Worse, put out a 45 in 1981. He's worked as a newswriter for MTV, and toured with the Glenn Branca ensemble from '83 to '86.

Now that you know the cast, on to the record: Three songs on drum, as mentioned before, were produced by REM's Michael Stipe, whose name appears more times than theirs on the album jacket (Read: selling point). Stipe turns in some stunning background vocals also.

Every song on this 6½ song mini-LP is a blue-ribbon winner, from the haunting, gorgeous textures of "Grow Wild" to the little half-song that ends the record. Listening through headphones creates a spellbinding effect, which can all but turn a routine PATH ride into an exploration of worlds beyond.

"Grow Wild" makes the most of Rowe's eerie violin. I was abt disappointed that the violin was used so sparingly. Live, it's usually mixed above the bass guitars, its psychedelic tones swirling around Goese's vocal pyrotechnics. My favorite songs for the moment is "The Eskimo Song," a simple Eskimo lullaby that I find myself humming incessantly. Rare guitar sounds more like a harpsichord on "Fancy," the cover track. I know I'm not going to be welcome at anymore of their shows if I say this, but it reminds me of Annie Haslam and Renaissance.

Side 2 starts with Stipe's ranting intro to "Eureka," another striking vote for simplicity. In "Country," Goese repeats the line, "color landscapes echoing vivid blue and brilliant red" until you can actually see them. I never knew how melodic the bass guitar could be. "Second Skin" suffers most here. Live, the textures and dynamics slap you in the face. Multiple vocals can't compete with the pure violent emotion Goese coaxes out of the phrase, "I'm wearing a second skin" on stage. She screams it for all the world to hear.

I love this record but not as much as I love Hugo Largo's live performances. Buy the LP for Stipe's background vocals, but it for the stunning tunes, but buy it. Just don't expect kickass rock 'n roll.

HUGO LARGO

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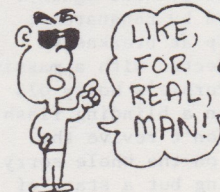
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THE T-SHIRT!

Yuppie From Hell

by Dawn Eden

Remember the glory days of satirical comedy? Remember when you could tune in Ed Sullivan or That Was The Week That Was and see geniuses like Tom Lehrer, Allan Sherman, Stan Freberg, and Jonathan Winters? Neither can I. Which is why, now, in a world of Sam Kinison's and Eddie Murphys, David Chelsea is a breath of fresh air.

By day, Chelsea is a mild-mannered graphic artist. Nicknamed "The Yuppie From Hell," Chelsea, with his Clark Kent looks, appears to be the height of conventionality. It's only when he takes the stage that he transforms himself into a hilarious pseudo-lounge singer, reminiscent of Bill Murray's Nick Rivers on Saturday Night Live.

Chelsea is best known for writing lyrics to surf instrumentals. Backed by guitarist Jason Goodrow and drummer Hector Mark, he turns the Ventures' classic "Walk Don't Run" into a tribute to the convenience of Chinese food, "Wok Don't Run." He also performs originals, the best of which is an artist's macho paean to female objectification, "Be My Model."

A regular fixture at such Village nightclubs as Nightingales and Dixon Place, Chelsea has an address if you'd like to be on his mailing list; 91 E. 3rd St., NYC 10003. For those of you sick of music that takes itself too seriously, David Chelsea is a sure cure.

VIVA UNKHONTO! A Benefit Compilation

Mordam Records, Box 988, San Francisco, CA 94101

Profits from this excellent int'l comp go to Unkhonto We Sizwe, the military wing of the ANC, so beware: Anti-apartheidism is a noble cause but the money from sales of this LP will go to a group that advocates and uses violence; so if you believe in non-violence and ghandism, then this is one cause that will present thorny moral issues. The LP does come with a booklet that outlines Umkhonto's case & history. Putting politics aside, the music comes highly recommended, from Scream's rousing oi-metal "Feel Like That" to the Ex' chilling assassination scenario, "Dallas, Texas, 1988." African, American, British, and Dutch hardcore and punk comprise the rest, with bravura performances on just about every cut. BGK's "Nothing Can Go Wrong" defines the moral dilemma of supporting a good cause with money for guns & bombs best for me: "As safe as walking a tightrope blindfolded/ playing russian roulette with all the chambers loaded/using a lighter to find the gas leak/the first mistake might be the last."

- J.T.

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HATRED are, in my eyes, the most promising NJ band in years. They not only play with extreme talent, but they have matured and now write lyrics with great intelligence. Since this interview (done with guitarist Jerry Dale), they have added a second guitarist and recorded a demo for record companies and should be signed in the near future.

Q: What do you think of the success of bands like Metallica, Slayer, etc. today, and how do you think it will help you?

Jerry: I think it's great. Underground is starting to get noticed and I hope we're next.

Q: If you could do anything to help the metal scene in this area, what would you do?

J: Open more clubs!!

Q: Why are Mike and Joe no longer in the band, and who replaced them?

J: Drug and attitude problems. Dave Schlosser, Bone (vocals) and Dan Spino (guitar) replaced them. The new band is incredible, everything is working out great.

Q: When will the album finally be out?

J: Who knows?!!

Q: Has the lyrical content of your songs changed? How?

J: Yes, Mike tried to be as sick as possible and it got boring. Now we write about whatever interests us at that moment.

Q: Will you be playing out more?

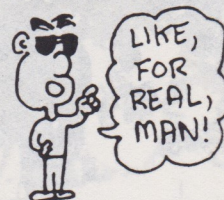
J: As soon as the new lineup is ready. We want to be perfect so we can annihilate everybody!

Q: Any last comments?

J: Thanks for the interview. Listen to Hatred all of the time. There is no future!

by

MIKE AIELLO



MOFUNGO

End Of The World, Part 2, LP
Lost/TwinTone

More euphonic, euphonic lumpen-grind from dwntn post-Beefheart visionaries. The sound of two human bodies locked together in bliss plus all the accompanying gurgles, crunches, & clopping - or of eating a hearty 'n nutritious meal plus all the accompanying...Mofungo always sound spontaneous, are consistently unpredictable, seemingly out of a spirit of playfulness, not academic dogmatizing. Like The Scene Is Now, they remind me (I hate to say it again) of the dB's if Stamey had bent Petey to his arty will way back when. Fuckin' delightful. - Howard Wuelfing

PRONG

"Primitive Origins" EP

Mr. Bear, PO Box 1169, Cooper Sta., NYC, NY 10276
CBGB Hardcore Matinee Meets Homestead post-industrial guitar-grind music: terse, stripped down and raw thrash with beefy Bigfoot growls for vocals and stinging lead guitar, not metal but wiry. Prong's lyrics are bleak, confrontational, and often so terse as to function like urban American haikus: suggesting worlds of imagery in a few clipped phrases. Impressive.

- Jim Testa

WHITE ZOMBIE

Psycho Head Blowout, EP

Silent Explosions, Box 1364, Cooper Sta., NYC 10276
When I viddie pix o' Brit neo-spizzniks like Zodiac Mindwarp, Das Psyche-0-Rangers, or Gaye Bykers, or even slooshie their innervisions, I imagine their music being Huge, spasming, messes o'noise shot thru with garbage-truck riffing and a cavernous bottom. Instead you get tin-plated rattle-toy wielded by men with paint-on facial hair. White Zombie are the Rill Thang. First track is reflexive Homestead slumming, but the remainder is pretty fuggin' neat. "88" reminds me of the windout on Blue Cheer's "Summertime Blues." Other cuts have a maniacal bent to 'em: Hot guitar licks a-bla-zin', that shoulda been the logical outcome of 60/70's hard-rock wackism ala' Sir Lord Baltimore, Dust, etc. -- a tastier concept than the slick, predictable fluff that the genre evolved into by 1974.

- H.W.

A.P.P.L.E.

"A Sensitive Fascist Is Very Rare" 7"-EP
25 Van Dam St, Brooklyn NY 11222

Gothic female vocals over clobbering punk-rock affixed to 60's folk/rock activism and awareness make NYC's A.P.P.L.E. as listenable as they are politically important in today's sanitized, self-involved club scene. Includes a 12-age booklet about the band & its beliefs. Can this really be the first record by a NY band to confront the shame of the City's numberless homeless? The spirit of Bob Dylan lives on.

- J.T.



Jukebox Jury

P.E.D.

"Xerox For Yugoslavia" EP
Z Sam Shiffman, 320 Montgomery St.
Highland Park, NJ 08904

This is hardcore for people too old to skateboard; punk-rock with speed & energy, funny & clever throughout. "NCO2" and "1/2 Pounder No Cheese" will knock your sox off. P.E.D. are New Brunswick's best, or damn close to it.

BLISTERS

"Fast Food" EP

P.O. Box 166, Green Village, NJ 07935

This first vinyl from NJ's Blisters is way overdue. They've outgrown but not renounced their enormous debt to the Ramones, and turn in three tight, hard, straightahead rock tunes bristling with energy & high spirits, each celebrating the joys of things like junk food, fast girls, and cool times. Gabba gabba.

TERRY HUGHES

"Mutiny On French Street"/"Girl From Bayonne"
Z Mountain Records, Box 1231, Mountainside, NJ 07092

New Brunswick scenemeister Terry Hughes released this 45 last year but we just scored a copy. Like Hughes' earlier work with 101 and other bands, it's straightforward rock'n roll, with an early Stones, chords 'n scruff sound, and loads of fun. The A-side is a none-too-affectionate valentine to the old owners of Brunfuss' infamous Roxy, recorded live at the Court Tavern. The B-side pays homage to all these sleazy bimbos from the other end of the Turnpike. Nj rules, ok?

DAS DAMEN

DAS DAMEN

Jupiter Rings, LP
SST Records

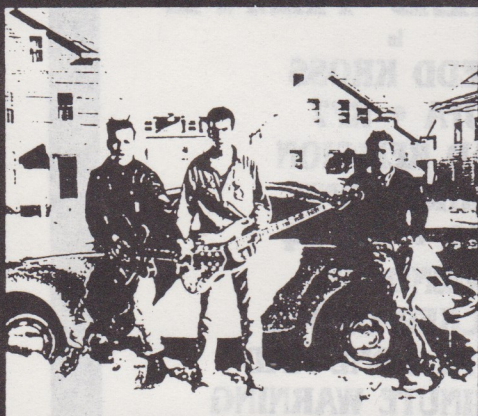
For some odd reason, few people I talk to like this band. The fact that their members come with great credentials - from two hot HC units, NY's Misguided and NJ's (sadly unknown) Youth In Asia - should not have much bearing, since Das Damen's sound is totally different: Throttling garage-like spinout hipness. Plus, they're now on SST - the kiss of death, says noted critic Paul Decolator. Although SST does have its share of schlock, this is very minimal compared to all of the cool & diverse units on the label. More so now than ever, many SST bands are simply too adventurous for punkers with blinders on.

Although this LP has some fine moments, overall I find it disappointing. One of the main problems is the production, which squashes the sound too often into the same grey area, forcing the hyper-strummed rarely over-distorted guitars to sound the same on many of the tunes. Those rare, softer moments truly stand out, but they are all too infrequent. Although most of these tunes are very energized, many are not that memorable. Strong ideas here, but they're rather unbaked; not actual songs. It should be more important to write entire songs that grab & hold onto the listener, not just a succession of solid passages. Songs should build and tell stories, both musically and vocally... but enough advice.

I really like these guys much more live, where their frenzy explodes. They ARE very strong players - hot, fat, and pumping but melodic bass, immense pounding drums, and an amazing double-guitar storm strumming away as well. They are visually exciting too, with their long hair whipping every which way. Definitely catch them in concert, they might be giants.

- Bruce Lee Gallanter

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SICK OF
IT ALL

by Mike Aiello

The band Sick Of It All formed about a year ago. At the time, the original bassist was too busy saying he was in a band to put any attention into being in the band, so he was released. After a while, the original drummer, who helped write a lot of the songs, went nuts, and he left the band too.

Soon after, Rich, a friend who played bass, and Armon, who had been in Rest In Pieces and Straight Ahead, joined as the new rhythm section, and two months later, Sick Of It All recorded their first demo, which was released last October.

The band plays a lot on Long Island and recently did their first CBGB matinee. The tape is selling great and even got a good review in Maximum Rock N Roll, a real achievement for a NY area band. You can order the tape or write to the band at:
43-51 167 St.
Flushing, NY 11358.

The current lineup is Lou, vocals; Peter, guitar; Rich, bass; and Armon, drums.

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**Smoke
Seven**

by Bruce Lee Gallanter

SMERSH

The Beat From 20,000 Fathoms, LP
RRRecords, 151 Paige St. Lowell, MA 01852, or
SMERSH, 337 William St., Piscataway, NJ 08854

We live in a culture imprisoned by time & routine. The universal clock ticks away as time slowly runs out. There is an inner beat/throb that gives structure to events. The struggle is not wanting to follow this beat/structure; yet we almost inevitably give in.

Smersh has taken both the beat and the events themselves and distorted them to almost unrecognizable extremes. They have made a disturbing but fascinating science of distortion. Hysterical, menacing, and usually shouted vocals grab at us and demand attention. Mutated and diseased guitars melt and growl with other disorienting feedback-induced sounds thickening up the brew. The endless simple-but-seductive drum machine beats at the center, like a ball & chain holding us down to the ground. On rare occasions, naive melodies make their way to the surface, like a small bead of liquid hope.

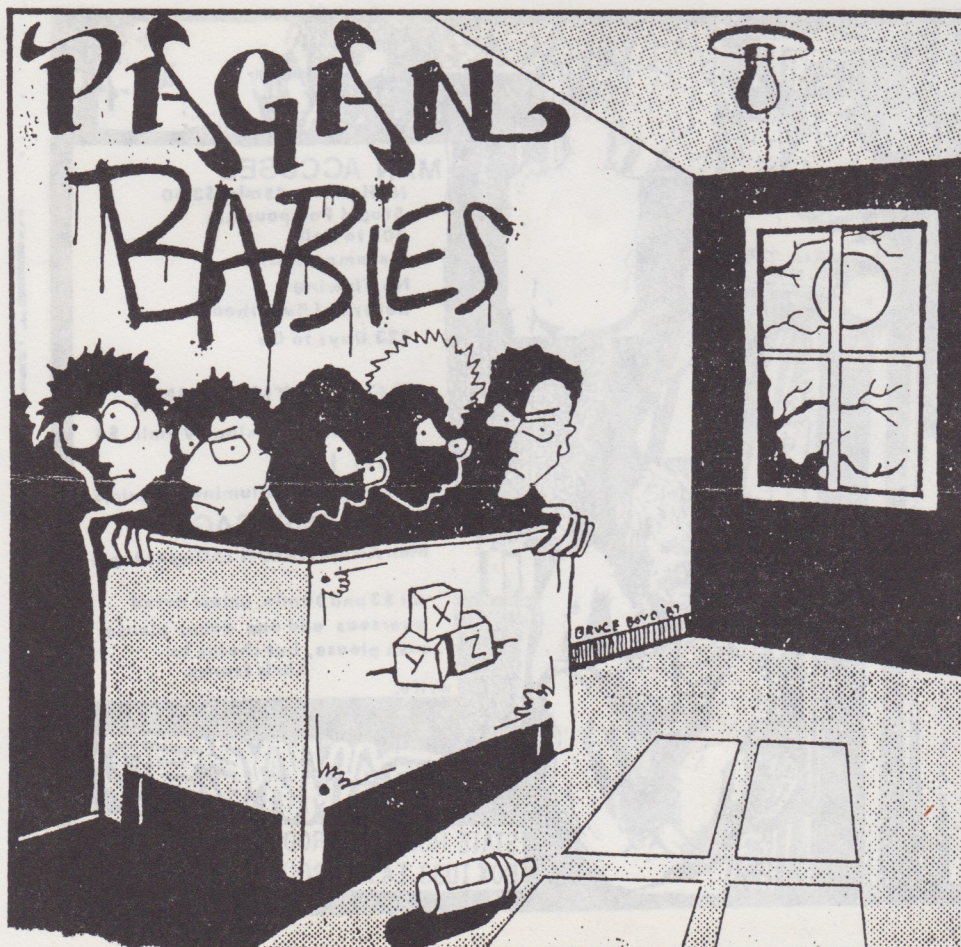
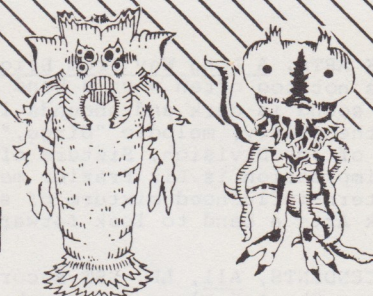
Smersh's first LP release is entitled "The Beat From 20,000 Fathoms," most appropriately since their beat is from somewhere else - molasses-like sounds oozing through our speakers and coating our brains. I recognize at least 3 of these pieces from previous cassette releases, so this is a compilation of sorts. There is new work as well, as they have recently collaborated with Sue Braun (CIAJ) and Thom (review of his new work elsewhere in this ish). Their sounds continue to inject the elements of fear & paranoia into the veins of a society too slick & predictable for its own good.

Side A seems to be more of their older, more primitive, thicker type of abuse, while Side B shows Smersh maturing. Instead of the layers of guitar & rhythm machine warpings, we get more refined keyboard synth-oriented sounds. The drum machine is less ominous than ever, and even occasionally distortion-free.

Their furthest departure to date is "The Man Who Ate Steam," where they actually achieve a somber, more restrained tone throughout. The droning vocal chants are quite hypnotic from a more positive viewpoint. There is a soft flow which washes over us with an effective warmth.

Also much less disturbing than usual is "Hollow Promises." Do I hear some melodic beats in there for a change? Unusually uplifting for these dark-hearted dudes... Nice to hear these Smersh people (for the record, Mike Mangino and Chris Shepard) lightening up their act. Can we actually picture them as human beings, unlike some of the monsters who inhabit the cover of this LP??? Smersh continue to create a world all their own, so take a glimpse with your ears...they do not perform on stage. Lucky for us.

SMERSH



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DARK ARTS, A Long Way From Brigadoon, EP, Ruthless Records, PO Box 1458, Evanston, IL 60204
 It's not too often when a band comes out with a name that describes exactly what they sound like. The sound is dark and abounds in art. From the driving percussion and moody vocals on "Rivers", to the pretty, melodic "Dirge," this new EP has everything it takes to fit in with the cult following of Joy Division, Sisters of Mercy, and the Cocteau Twins. In fact, to describe it in these terms, my impression is Liz Frazier meets Coil. The haunting, beautiful female vocals, moody piano, and Eastern-influenced mixture of sounds and textures strike a unique and flamboyant balance that make Dark Arts a band to look forward to for many years to come.

- John Lisa

DESCENDENTS, All, LP, SST Records
 "Clean Sheets" alone is enough to make you believe that these scruffy ex-hardcores have the Right Stuff to replace the likes of the dBs, Bongos, and, heck, even the Archies in the hearts of pop-rock fans. Fast, funny, gloriously catchy, and totally infectious, this is a record with hooks, smarts, and melodies to spare.

JT

LONG RYDERS, Two Fisted Tales, LP, Island Records
 Now that they've made it to a major label, these hard-working, dues-paying, roots-oriented club rockers have finally made their first LP that I found completely unlistenable. They seem to have completely run out of the melodic and lyrical ideas that made them so much fun in the first place, and Ed Stasium's production sounds designed for the kinds of records they play over the P.A. at malls. Yuck.

JT

RHYTHM PIGS, Choke On This, LP, Mordam Records, PO Box 388, San Francisco, CA 94101
 Moving closer to a Zappa/Beefheart allegiance to avantist jazz, time signatures and chord changes that boggle the ear, and free-verse poetry for lyrics, these Pigs still rock it and have a killer anti-Maximum Rock N Roll song to boot for all you punk theorists out there to relish. Wow.

JT

KGB, Letzte Bestellung, LP, Hardway Records, PO Box 629, Newark, CA 94560
 Sick of initial bands? So am I, but I'm even more sick of hardcore bands with initials that don't stand for anything! But this album packs a punch right to yet balls! This must be West Germany's answer to the Dead Kennedy's (w/o Jello's vocals, of course). Fast, hard-driving guitar and bass w/o much distortion, three-quarters of the lyrics are in German and there's a cover of "Ballroom Blitz" on here that you will not forget. Unfortunately, much of this is also your basic generic hardcore, but if that's your thing, give this a shot.

JL

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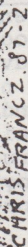
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METAL UNDERGROUND

by MIKE AIELLO



METAL BUZZ

Many bands doing much moving. Recently, Voivod and Kreator played the area with great success. Many important people were there, including Michael Alago of Elektra, the man responsible for signing Metallica and Metal Church. He had nothing but positive things to say about the band. Anthrax just shot a video for "Indians," it should be on MTV in a few months. Bloodfeast is currently working out a U.S. tour with Canada's Sacrifice. Lethal Aggression signed to One Step Ahead Records and also should appear on Death Records' comp "Complete Death II." Also possible for that album is NJ's Hatred. Metallica will record a new album soon. Don Doty has rejoined Dark Angel. Whiplash's Tony Bono was recently hurt in a car accident; according to the band's Tony Portaro, he should be ok soon and the band hopes to record in a few months. Overkill recently returned from a German tour; reports are that Taking Over is not selling as well as expected. Iron Angel went commercial? Blind Illusion and Exodus hopefully soon. Venom on RCA? Possessed EP on Combat due soon, advance tape is GREAT! Hoboken's Attacker is back with a new lead singer and circulating a new demo tape. And finally...someone I know in California spoke to a hairdresser for some of the locals out there (Motley Crue, etc.) and the inside story is that those poser boys Ratt have broken up! Now watch how soon everyone forgets them!

- Mike A.

CHEMICAL WASTE
"Life's A Bitch" Demo, Box 331, Ft. Lee, NJ 07024

I received this tape having already seen Chemical Waste live. Their show was, in my opinion, exceptional; they reminded me a lot of D.R.I.'s older material and left me expecting a lot from their demo. Unfortunately, the tape isn't up to the live performance; the band comes across as rough in the studio and production is lacking in many areas. There is a lot of potential and I really recommend trying to catch them live, and let's hope their next tape lives up to their live shows.

YOUTH OF TODAY

Break Down The Walls, LP, Wishing Well Records

The "Band of Bands" finally has a 12" release and it's a great one. I call them the "Band of Bands" because aside from Ray (vocals) and John (guitar), everyone else is from another band: Craig (bass) from Straight Ahead, Drew (drums) from Crippled Youth, and Richie (guitar) from Underdog. Richie has since left the band and Crippled Youth is now called Bold. Drew only played drums for YoT's album sessions and they're now using another drummer live....Anyway, this album is excellent, all new songs except "Positive Outlook" (from their earlier EP). A definite must.

BLOODFEAST

Kill For Pleasure, LP, New Renaissance Records

Blood Feast hail from Bayonne, NJ and this is their debut. It's not bad but I feel another label could have been much better for them. New Renaissance doesn't give bands a lot of money to record and with a limited budget, the production on their LP's is usually not the best. This does have a great cover and their next LP should be even better.

NASTY SAVAGE

Indulgence, LP, Metal Blade Records

After a long absence, Nasty Savage is back and in better form than ever. They were out of commission for a long time due to an accident which took the hand of their original bassist. Finally a replacement was found in the form of Dezso Istvan Barther, whom they found in France. Enough history. The album is fucking great. The new version of "XXX" is total mayhem, with drums sounding so heavy, it's almost impossible to believe that their first album was such a disappointment. Overall, the production here is great, the songs are great, the album...you guessed it. So go buy it.



SLEEZE TO PLEEZE

BY ST. LOOPS

TEEZE- 9 song L.P.
Greenworld / SMC RECORDS

Just the fact that their name rhymes nicely with this column gets them brownie points (SO SUE ME...) This disk is true SLEEZE from the first to the last crunch guitar chord...they put on a slick show too, by the way. Some titles include: "PARTY HARDY", (no relation to LAUREL AND...) "MIDNIGHT MADNESS", "LOOKING FOR ACTION", and "HELLRAISER". Members include, Gregg Malack/gtr, Kevin Stover/dr, Brian Stover/gtr, Luis Rivera/voc, and Dave Weakley/bs (pictured). If you were ever into SLEEZE GRINDERS, pick this one up....

REMINGTON-"Hot City Night" 7 song L.P.

The guitar sounds really cool, but otherwise it tends to get a little too commercially bland for my taste. I mean, these guys can play but the vinyl kinda went through me like chinese food. The funny thing is that they're probably just what the "big labels" are looking for, so what the fuck does someone who calls himself a LORD know anyway...A GREAT FUCKIN' DEAL...

SKULLS-"Dress Up and Die" 6 song E.P.
BUY OUR RECORDS

I know its not brand new, but either is my car and it still kix. Charlie Pip is a god-like creature to me. I can remember watching him LIVE and thinking, that guy is a spooky mother... The tunes on this plastic are spooky at times too, but intense rock-n-roll crunchers at that. They're like late 70's punk meets NIKKI SIXX and a biker slut in a GO-GO bar on acid, yeah, thats it...Mike Mindless is a nice guy, don't let his nasty looks fool you. He is also a collector of basses and black duds. Vox Hall ain't a SKULL anymore but he did all the crashin' and bashin' on this slab. Tunes include "JESUS PUT A BULLET THROUGH MY SOUL", "COFFIN CRUISER", "IDOLS AND DOLLS", and a great old SWEET song, "SET ME FREE". If you were wondering how it felt for a grenade to go off in your shorts or to have your ear pierced with a jackhammer, check them out LIVE... Yes, they can get quite loud, almost LOUD enough....

MYSTERY CITY- cassette E.P.

O.K. so its not actually finished yet but, I know what its gonna sound like.... It's like GOD comin' down and recording the best CRUNCH ever. It'll be SLEEZE and LOUD and RUDE, somewhat AOR with some hot production and slick tunes.... It's gonna be GODS gift to ROCK-N-ROLL. By the way, I'm in the band, could you tell???

SEND ME ALL OF YOUR SLEEZE - % JIM TESTA 414 GREGORY AVENUE WEENAWEN, N.J. 0708

BLATANT DISSENT

"Fist Comes Down/Eleven Days"
PO Box 127, DeKalb, IL 60115

Powerful raging punk-rock with scorching guitars and vocals, drums provided by none other than Big Yeah's Mike Greenlees...and we all know that any band with a fanzine editor in it totally rules, right? Seriously, this is highly recommended.

MEIM NOONE

"Like Before"/"Hard & Tough..."
Prospective, Box 6425, Mpls, MN 55406

One of about 2 dozen 45's from Minneapolis we've received in the past few months... this 'un features Roger DeBace (of willful Neglect fame) and St. Paul pals playing hi-grade, streamlined pop tunes. No special spark but fine listening, enough that I'd welcome hearing more.

THE CRASHDUMMIES

"Oii Can People", Stucco Records
Box 3173, Traffic Sta., Mpls, MN 55403
Art-rock with a dancebeat, a debt to Big Black, jazz musicianship, and hi-tech 2-track digital recording. And utterly forgettable.

REACTION FORMATION

"Galesburg Bound"/"Break Away"
GO2, Box 6425, Mpls, MN 55406
Like the Outlets' Dave Barton, RF's Brian Steele has a voice that suggests innocence & hope, strong & meaningful emotions when you're struggling in a very minor band in a very crowded scene. If Reaction Formation aren't the toast of the Twin Cities (yet), they're at least dependably tuneful and inventive popsters - and given the dearth of Greater NY area pop bands these days, I always look forward to their demos & 45's.

DESPERATE MINDS

"A Chance To Feel Emotions Alive" EP
Chikara, Box 971, Kamloops, B.C. Canada
Sounding like Verbal Assault with a tad more metal influence, Desperate Minds helped me realize I wasn't sick of hard-core, just the soundalike 'positive punk' cliché that rules the NW scene. Strong & diverse songs with well-wrought vocal arrangements and good production make this 5-song EP worth checking out.

Sat./Early Sun.

11 PM - 1:10 AM

1:10 **CNN** TRAVEL GUIDE

SHO MOVIE-Comedy-Drama; 1 hr., 35 min.
"Echo Park."

9 MOVIE-Mystery; 2 hrs.

"Berserk." (British; 1967) Joan Crawford dominates this lurid tale of murder and mayhem in a traveling circus. Ty Hardin.

20 MOVIE-Thriller; 2 hrs.

"Attack Of The Slutkillers" (1968)
Ski-masked weirdos with a Farifsa organ manacle innocent teenage cheerleaders in their living room and force them to endure unspeakable garage-punk clatter. All of Kearny, NJ, is soon terrorized by these three maniacs as they visit diners & donut shops dressed up as hippies, chefs, Hitler, pseudo-intellectuals, etc. Original soundtrack cassette available from John Woodmaska, 11 Hamilton Ave., Kearny, NJ 07032.
Dir: Herschel Gordon Lewis

USA MOVIE-Thriller; 90 min.

"Demonoid." (1981) Murders and skulduggery prevail when a couple disturbs a satanic Mexican temple. Samantha Eggar, Roy Cameron Jensen. Priest: Stuart Whitman.

SINGLES

THE EDGE

"The Banjo Single"

Smear. 5862 Windmere La., Fairfield, OH 45014
"Just An Illusion" makes that quantum leap from just another power-pop tune to one of those rare little records that really get you excited. You know, like "Black And White" or "Radio Free Europe," the kind of record you want to play for all your friends right away. Basically it's a poppy Britpunk anthem with a banjo artfully worked into the mix; the B-side adds a harmonica with similar results. Yeah!

RUIN
 Fiat Lux, LP
 Meta Meta Records
 1015 Chestnut, #500, Philadelphia PA 19107

Philadelphia's Ruin is back with another vinyl offering and it's definitely their best to date. Fiat Lux, an album which not only delivers forceful harmonies and upbeat pop punk melodies, but great musicianship too. Ruin, in the vein of the Descendants, D.O.A., etc. vary in style from the hard-rocking, haunting tune of "Hero" to the speedy, tight, singalong "Make Believe" and a very good cover of the Airplane's "White Rabbit." You might catch Ruin playing a CB's matinee and live, they are tight as hell and sound just as good as they do on the album. Unfortunately, some of the vocals on the album get lost in the music and that makes it hard to hear the lyrics. Nevertheless, the LP is straightforward rock 'n roll that you will undoubtedly like. If there was one major comparison I'd make, it would be to 7 Seconds' new material.

- John Lisa.



RUIN

PUSSY GALORE

Pussy Gold 5000, EP

Buy Our Records, PO Box 363, Vauxhall, NJ 07088

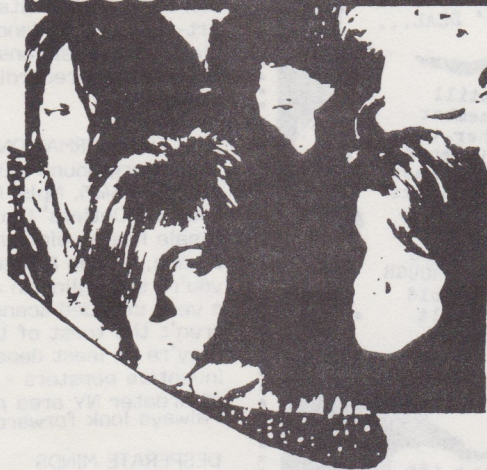
Buy Our Records continued to expand its horizons beyond hardcore while occasionally plunging into the depths of depravity. This release, Pussy Galore's first (and probably last) for the label, will confound many. It is one of the nastiest pieces of vinyl to come out this year; a sludge masterwork or a useless piece of shit?? I'll go with the first assertion.

Pussy Galore bother with no pretense or subtlety or even the usual rhythm team. There is no bass on this disc, a startlingly unique idea put to good use. Instead, there are 4 fucking totally twisted (but somehow always together) guitars - a snarling ugly wall of noise that really works as a cogent force. The throbbing central rhythm is provided by Bob Bert, who used to drum for Sonic Youth, but here does some primal pounding on metals only. The vocals also have been recorded in their most primitive sounding way, most befitting. It does take some imagination to penetrate this dense brew of warped sonic spirits. It's worth the challenge when all the guitars hit that same monstrous note/feeling at the same time, launching the listener off into hyperdrive and pushing the environment sideways. These moments fully stand out like the first ray of sunshine after a nuclear annihilation.

If you think the cast on the cover look unfriendly, just wait till you see them in person - their image, attitude, and sound all go together: "Fuck you to the world." Although Neil Haggerty gets to sing more on this record than he does live, it is Jon Spencer, whose immensely haunting/gripping vocals fuck with our minds, who commands. Each time I have encountered Pussy Galore on stage, they have gotten stronger and make more sense...yes, the disease is growing and slowly spreading. Are you ready for Pussy Galore...or are ya justa pussy?

- Bruce Lee Gallanter

PUSSY GOLD 5000



THOM

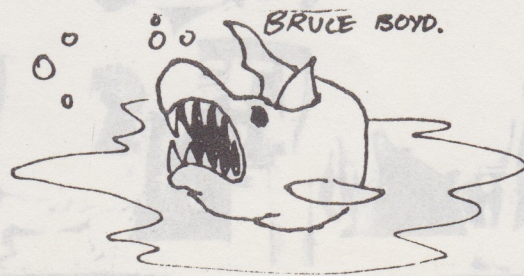
"Mop Granaghlia" Cassette

Noiseland, 30 Richbell Rd., Groveville, NJ 08620

There was a period in the mid-70's when I was listening to as much electronic music as I could get my hands on. After a good deal of study, I came to realize that the better electronic music composers were creating worlds of their own, with their own sets of rules. If a certain piece worked, one could get lost within it. There was always some sort of logic at work, although it was not always easy to pick out. The composers that stand out include Mimoroglu, Subotnick, Babbitt, Stockhausen, and Cage, as well as those coming from a more pop framework like Zappa or Eno. A new generation of these composers is upon us, so make way...

This is THOM (Meyernick's) 3rd tape release and it is an hour-long compositional journey. It is a marvel to behold, yet not too difficult to grasp. It is fresh, & yes never overwhelmingly alien. The structure of "Mop Granaghlia" consists of often simple, yet mildly magnetic, rhythm lines, that appear for a minute or two, only to disappear into a haze of fascinating, stereo-panned sounds that bounce in and out of the mix. Certain moments glow with sonic success, as the overall feeling builds up or fades away. The occasional vocals are mostly altered so reference points are often well hidden, or at least disguised. Thom has done a monumental job of collecting those rare bizarre moments, often excerpted from guitar, bass, and feedback sounds and put them together in some semblance of order. While one section of this tape sounds like Eugene Chadbourne's "Guitar Freakout" release, other portions have a rather calming quality of layered washing machines droning together. Zappa or the Residents seem like an obvious influence, but who knows for sure... All in all, Thom has definitely matured musically and taken exponential leaps forward in realizing his personal view of a world of his own. So, send for this tape, fellow explorers, and share it with him.

Glowing with sonic success



ANY OF SEVERAL WEASELS

61 Franklin St., ER, NY 11518

Hard to describe sounding...sorta up tempoish heavy rock music bordering punk rock, except without the musical inability. These guys were probably more inspired by 60's garage music. The band is full of very crafty musicians, incredible percussion, and the guitar is pretty neat too, although I must admit that the vocals tend to get repetitious. And hey, guess what? There's even a cool cover tune here...to find out what, you'll have to mail away for this tape. Go for it!

McRAD - Demo cassette

5616 Cedar Ave., Philadelphia, PA 19143

Searing thrash-metal with arena-rock guitar leads, this band also plays reggae SO GUESS WHAT BIG NAME SST BAND IMMEDIATELY COMES TO MIND???? Anyway these guys are incredibly fucking hot to watch live and this tape manages to capture a lot of the emotion and energy that they exert whilst on stage. Last time I saw 'em it was mostly reggae with some thrash but this tape is almost all thrash-core. If this is kind of muzak is your bag of parsley, then write for it.

CARL CASANOVA - "White Fuck Sings The Blues"

171 3rd St., Jersey City, NJ 07305

The only thing that could possibly be worse than this is the band Carl was in before, Psycho Sin. CARL, GIVE IT THE FUCK UP! This is supposed to be "folk-punk." I've got a better label for it though: stupidpseudosuburbansuckshittinesscore. This kid wants you to listen to this tape and say, "gee whiz he's really in touch!" Wrong. Buy it to amuse yourself. Before you learn how to make good music, Carl, you have to learn how to speak. If you haven't understood this review yet, I'll write this last sentence in Cassanovian for you: Dis tape here muddafukkin iddint veddy fuhkkin good and evryting Karl so fuhk yawseff.



Skooter Robinson's LSD+G

22 Ely Pl., Edison, NJ 08817

Pretty plain punk rock, nothing interesting at all. Not as bad as some other bands I've heard although it is mighty generic. These guys probably have a big following in all the local high schools in Edison, though...whatever.

THE RAID

659 55th St., Brooklyn, NY 11220

Wild insane punk rock ala' Sex Pistols or the Dickies. Put these guys in a studio and they could pump out a classic fuckin' disc. The lead singer has just enough ability to sound totally hot. This is my pick of the issue...buy this now before someone BIG discovers them...yeah...hi

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JUNE 20

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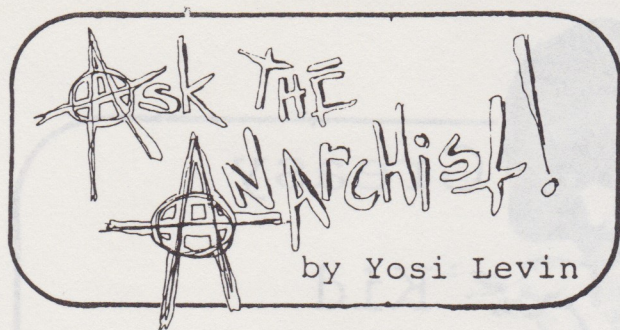
JULY 18

TRUE RUMOR

THE COST OF
LIVING

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Dear Yosi,

Hi! I'm a girl who's really turned on by almost all the guys in school. I just can't help it. I'm still a virgin but I want to lose it, but I don't want to be the talk of the town. What should I do? If anyone can help, I know you can.

Love,
Rhonda (from California)

Dear Nubile Young Virgin,

How right you are... I am the only one who is capable to relieve you of your burden. First, you are not the only one... many young horny femmes have written the same letter, so this goes to all of you! Send nude photos of yourselves (alone) in various sexual positions to "Ask The Anarchist" (c/o "I Wanna Lose It" Contest). The winners will be flown to beautiful downtown Newark, NJ, where they'll spend 3 gorgeous days and nights in La Holiday Inn Motel with our hardworking, generous judges...and then return to their respective hometowns with no guilt, no gossip, and great satisfaction.

Dear Mr. Anarchist,

As a high priest in the tri-state area, I make a point of (blah blah blah) and furthermore... (blah blah blah) poisoning the minds of young (blah blah blah) spoke to the Vatican...immoral, anti-religious...in short, you are doomed to Hell. Stop this column! Beg forgiveness. Find love and hope in Jesus Christ Our Lord.

Bishop O'Brian

Dearest and kindest loving Father,

I realize I have been wayward, unruly, and perhaps somewhat pagan, Your argument is strong and to the point, yet there is a slight oversight on your part. Allow me to express this grey blemish slightly...God doesn't exist! Now please leave me alone...\$100 check for the Oral Roberts fund is in the mail.

Dear Ask The (sex) Anarchist,

I love your (sex) column. I (kill) think it's (masturbate) great! But I (buy a Teddy Ruxpin) think it's filled with (sex) subliminal (die) messages. Therefore, I refuse (sex) to read (cry) it anymore (o.d.). Sorry (MTV), I was (Coke is it!) really beginning to (masturbate) like it.

Dave

Dear (pinko) Dave,

I (sex) understand your (Commie!) problem. But (Buy Our Records) I assure you (God is Dead), there are no (Satan!) subliminal (laugh) messages (clap!) to be found anywhere (tits & ass) in my (penis) column. You are (cancer) just suffering from a (sex) mild case of (read Ask The Anarchist) paranoia.

[Editor's Note: Dear Yosi, I think (READ JERSEY BEAT!) that you (BUY OUR T SHIRTS!!) handled that one (NOTES FROM THE UNDERGROUND, ONLY \$4 POSTPAID) really well! - Editor]

Dear Yosi,

I'm not writing about a problem I have, but a problem YOU have. I've seen The Exposed play twice so far & both times you did some crazy things on stage. I definitely think you need to be checked by a brain surgeon.

- Innocent Bystander

Dear G.G.,

Thanks for your concern. I have seen a brain surgeon. In fact, I've seen several. The general consensus is that I should be put away and that no one heed my advice.

CASSETTES

WEEN

"The Crucial Squeegie Lip"
Bird O' Pray, Box 39, Trenton, NJ 08601

This is sort of G.G. Allin for pre-pubescent, as 16-year old Dean and Gene Ween frolic through about 3 dozen songs (most under a minute long) about boobs, jelly, frogs, vitamins, everyone they know in high school, and the little thing inside the refrigerator that turns the light off when you close the door. Sure, it's kind of dumb and musically primitive, but Ween have solved the age-old question of how you make great rock 'n roll when you don't have any talent. Answer: You don't need any, just inventiveness, energy, and a sense of humor. (Remember "Louie, Louie?") Good taste is timeless.

- J.T.

CRUCIAL YOUTH

"The United Way"

% Dave Madsen, 6 Arbor La., Holmdel, NJ 07733

Straightedge "positive punk" takes a beating on this relentlessly funny satire by Crucial Youth, a South Jersey supergroup including F.C.C.'s Krishna Jain and the Shock Mommies' Jim Norton, among others. They preach against drugs, for weightlifting, and tell kids to "be positive" over & over & over, and include "positive" message songs like "Put Litter In Its Place" and "Be Kind, Rewind." For anyone who's ever wanted to punch Ian MacKaye in the mouth or tell Kevin Seconds to take a flying leap... Just don't expect to see them at the next Pyramid Saturday matinee with Youth of Today and Bold.

- J.T.

"Split Personality" - Man Accused and Greenboy
Damaged State Hospital Productions, Box 1033
E. Stroudsburg, PA 18301

Another strange spoken-word cassette from Man Accused, full of Thorazine-suppressed rage and hallucinatory fantasies. Side Two presents Greenboy, another spoken word performer, whose harsh shouted "Leagcy of Lunacy" is a disquieting foray into madness. Spooky.

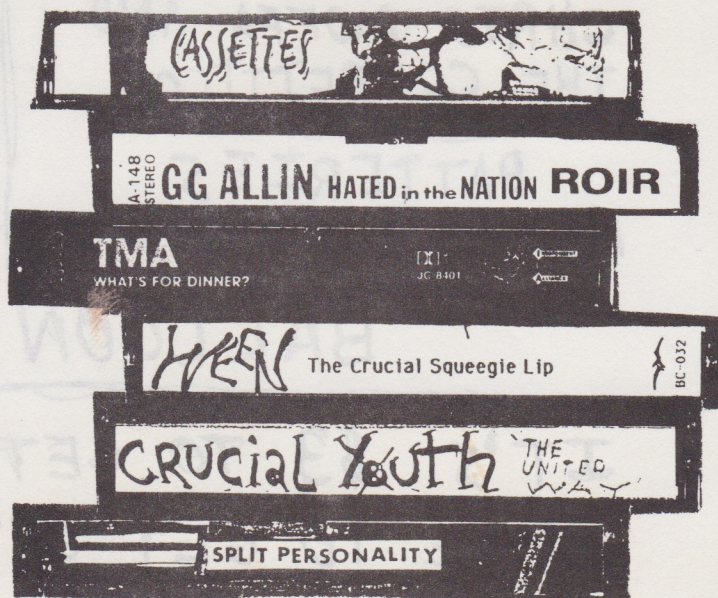
- J.T.

TMA

What's For Dinner, cassette
Jimboco/Independent Label Alliance

This is a re-release of TMA's 1984 album, with two extra cuts (including the funny, but dated, "Metuchen Punks"). Hard, driving punk with a funny edge, much like the first Angry Samoans LP, What's For Dinner should have been more widely heard when first released; but since the band's been all but invisible on the club scene during the last 3 years, I don't see the point of this re-release.

- J.T.



by Mark Fogarty

TOKYO PINK/THE HUMANS
Dirt Club, Bloomfield, NJ

Pop originals and a straightforward rock attack were on tap recently when Central NJ's Tokyo Pink played the Dirt Club. The band (Diane Vocaturo, keyboards and vocals; Ric Kordoz, guitar and vocals; David Rule, bass; Tom DiPaolo, lead guitar; and Jeffrey Carr, drums) has been in existence for two years and the current lineup has developed an enviable tightness that makes for an exciting show. (Unfortunately bassist Rule is scheduled to leave the band to tour with Prince.)

Tokyo Pink play Kordoz' originals, which are hooky enough to stay in your head after a listening or two. Frontman Kordoz also has a generally effective stage presence. The band was particularly tight on "Tonight," "I Never Noticed You Before," and their rocking finale, "Berlin." One thing the band needs to watch out for is using echo at the end of their songs. Kordoz listed Flock of Seagulls and Pat Benatar among the band's influences and has recorded a 3-song demo. They may return soon to the studio to record "Berlin." Also on the bill, The Humans (also known as The Humans From Earth) delivered an interesting blend of psychedelic rock, led by the guitar and sonorous voice of Jim Asherman (who also writes their songs). The trio (Asherman; Bill Ruffino on bass; and Brian Dunlap on drums) has been around since 1979, and has released two singles, a flexi-disc, and an 11-song demo. Although not every number was riveting, some of the better songs in their set were "Don't Ask Too Many Questions," "Electric Day," and "Changes." Beyond the obvious psychedelic influences, Asherman said the band enjoyed listening to the Who, Elvis Costello, Rockpile, and even various Wyndham Hill artists.

ON STAGE

GOO GOO DOLLS

Goo Goo Dolls, LP
Mercenary/Celluloid

This Buffalo-based trio's debut teeters on the brink of greatness, but everytime you think they're gonna detonate a song and make you forget about the New York Dolls, one little thing fizzles and they wind up with another dud. Still, there's great promise here and, looking at the 3 scruffy mooks in the band, you have to kind of wonder if they wouldn't be uncomfortable with greatness anyway. Okayness seems to suit them better. But shit, if there were any justice in the world, "Livin' In A Hut" would already be a bigger hit than "Talk Dirty To Me." Loud, reckless, scuzzy, breakneck rock; or as Shaggy of the Splatcats told me, "Heck, man, they just don't wanna be a hardcore band anymore, that's all."

FIGURE LIFE OUT

"Figure Life Out" 4-song EP
Flotation/Independent Label Alliance
PO Box 594M, Bay Shore, NY 11706

Figure Life Out is one of those Hoboken bands, like Tiny Lights or The Wayfarers, that's found a sound uniquely its own and doesn't much care about trends or popularity. Flute, sax, and percussion enhance a basically psychedelic/prog-rock approach, but only "What I Want" - a mind-melting pastiche of XTC cosmic pop - does it for me. The rest of the EP suffers from a mellow King Crimson groove which, in these frenzied times, seems like a lack of intensity.

THE DISTURBED

Totalled Volvo, EP
% Ben White, 2 Campbellton Circle, Princeton, NJ 08540
A year ago, The Disturbed were a bunch of high school kids who hung out at WPRB and made cool basement tapes. Then they split for Rhode Island and spent a year living, rehearsing, and being a band in funky digs that'd do The Monkees proud. The result is this GREAT EP, high-flying punk rock with a surfy guitar and cracker-jack rhythm section, cute snotty lyrics ("You're So Beautiful But You're A Slut" being but one example), and great vocals but a much-improved Krugie, who also plays guitar.

ROCK WITH A METAL EDGE



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"...ALL THE SONGS HAVE MORE THAN ENOUGH HOOKS FOR RADIO AIRPLAY
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ANNE LEIGHTON, MANAGING EDITOR, HIT PARADER

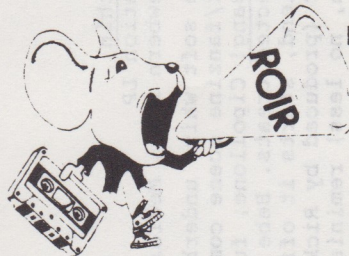
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by Dawn Eden

THE SOUNDS OF NOW, Dionysus, Box 1975, Burbank, CA 91507

BATTLE OF THE GARAGES, VOL. 4, Voxx, Box 7112, Burbank, CA 91510

Bone In Rochester, Jargon, Box 90594, Rochester, NY 14609

Fans of garage and psychedelia are having a field day with the release of these 3 compilations of new 60's-styled bands. Although the quality ranges widely, each album has its merits.

Lee Joseph seems to have compiled The Sounds Of Now more for his own pleasure than anyone else's. How else to explain the fact that out of 14 bands, the only ones to have two tracks are Yard Trauma (Joseph's own band) and Zebra Stripes (his wife's)? Those two groups are, to put it diplomatically, not the album's best.

Out of the 3 compilations, The Sounds Of Now is the only one that includes more covers than originals. Pennsylvania's Cynics do well with their snarly "Get Away Girl" and Maine's Brood (also known as "the female Chesterfield Kings") turn in a fine version of "You Lied To Me Before." Germany's Legendary Golden Vampires' version of "Heartbreak Hotel" is interesting, to say the least; it owes more to the MC5 than to Elvis. The standout cut is by another German band, the Chud (Cannibalistic Humanoid Underground Dwellers [a name lifted from a low-budget American horror flick of a few years back]). Their organ-flavored, guitar-heavy "Rumble At The Love-In" is very well-recorded, making them one of the few garage bands to get a clean studio sound without sacrificing raw energy.

Voxx' Battle of the Garages, Vol. 4 is more consistent than Now, with just as many highs and fewer lows. Its global theme makes for an interesting variety of music. From Italy, Birdman of Alcatraz' contributes "April Dancer," dedicated to Stephanie Powers [The Girl From UNCLE - Ed.] The song's reverberating fuzz guitar sound is reminiscent of the Electric Prunes' "I Had Too Much To Dream Last Night." The album's gem is Los Negativos' "Viaje Al Norte," Byrdsy folk/rock that's so well done, it doesn't matter if you can't understand the Spanish lyrics. Spain's answer to the Long Ryders?

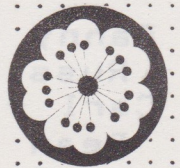
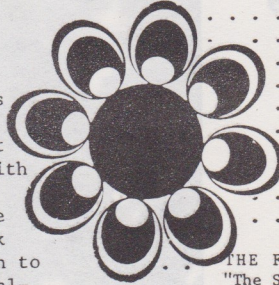
Other countries on Garages/4 include France, Germany, Holland, Great Britain, and Greece. The album's not a must-have, but definitely worth checking out if you're into the international garage/psyche scene.

Surprisingly, Bone In Rochester is the most enjoyable of the lot. It's surprising because Pat Thomas, the album's compiler, wrote a tirade against 60's psych/garage rock in Reasons For Living #2. Oh well, forgive & forget.

Rochester, as fans of 80's garage know, is home to The Chesterfield Kings. Thomas' purpose here is to show how much more talent resides in that college town. The Ferrets' "Record Man" takes a playful jab at people who devour Goldmine, while Mission Emission does a stomping version of Shocking Blues' "Send Me A Postcard." Thomas' Absolute Grey does "Getting Me Down," with an emotional fuzz riff that would do the Dream Syndicate proud. Among the many other choice cuts here is Luther N The BBB's "You're Making Me Cry," with great clearcut guitars and tight harmonies.

For all the gems & coal, these three compilations prove one thing: 1987 has an underground music scene that rivals 1967. Turn on your hi-fi & enjoy!

the scene is then...now



THE FUNSEEKERS

"The Special Sound Of..."

Susstone, Box 6425, Mpls, MN 55406

If Michael Chandler sang lead in Mod Fun instead of the Raunchhands...no, if Wayne Manor joined the Vipers...no, uhh, if Gerry & The Pacemakers had grown up in Minneapolis...no, if...

-J.T.

THE SMITHEREENS

"In A Lonely Place"/"Beauty & Sadness" Enigma 12" EP

The A-side is craven pseudo-bossa nova-esque AOR mush. Suzanne Vega's backing vocals only make it more so. Johnny Mathis would feel comfortable covering this. The live takes on the flip only show that back-when they had better taste in their plagiarism.

- Howard W.

THE DONNER PARTY

The Donner Party, LP

Cryptovision

CSNY get a fuzzbox, the Byrds go garage-happy, hey, this is nuevo-folk/rock that rocks, eccentric fuzzed-out amphetamine-laced psychedelia with 4-track Midnight swampbeat stomp but a kinky kinetic Feelies-ish flavor too. Tres' neat.

- J.T.

THE CYNICS

Blue Train Station, LP

Skyclad, 6 Valleybrook Dr, Middlesex, NJ The Cynics claim inspiration from the 13th Floor Elevators and the Kinks, but their music too often sounds like rehearsed riffs they stole from the 2nd Generation of 60's rockers, like the Lyres and Fleshtones. Which means that while some of this (esp. the title track) rips it up, too much of it thuds when it's supposed to stomp.

- J.T.

THE STEPFORD HUSBANDS

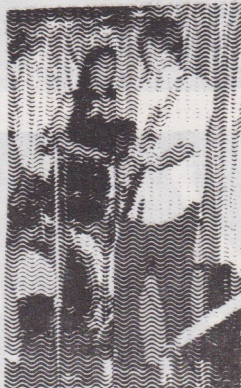
New Ways Of Seeing, LP

Cryptovision, Box 1812, NYC, NY 10009

These mid-tempo 60's-ish rockers are so sketchy they sound more like demos than fully realized songs. With the 4 Husbands located in different parts of the globe, it's no wonder; they may get together to record & perform twice a year, but you can't really run a band by long distance, and while these tracks are pleasant enough - sparse, simple arrangements of folk/rock guitar, Farfisa fills, and very light drumming - they sound half-finished.

- J.T.

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Of the
60's
ToDaY!



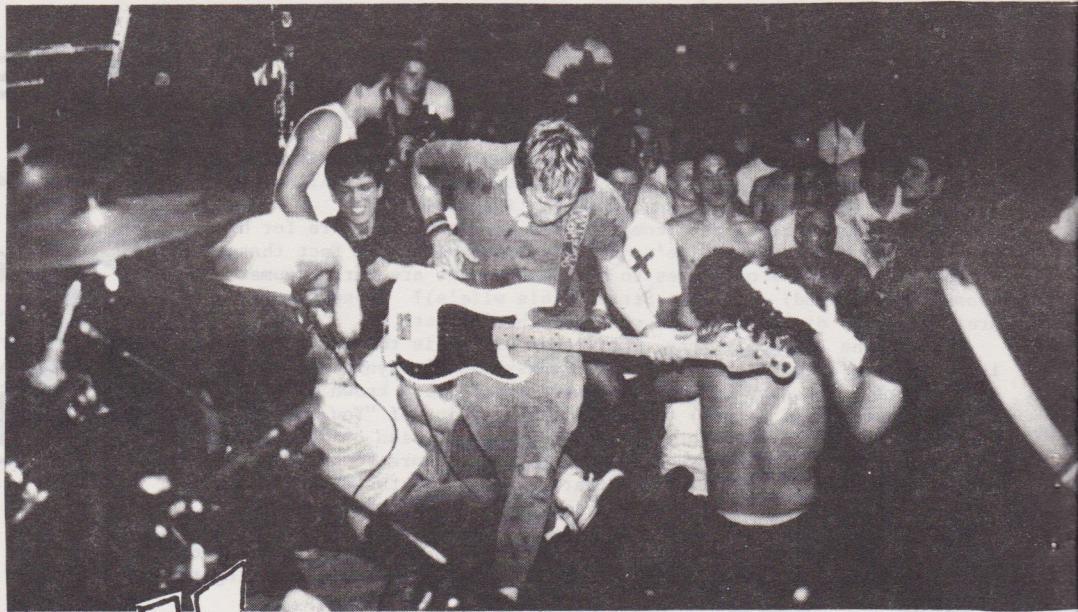
SCREAMING BROOCOLI, Screaming Broccoli, LP
HOLLYWOOD INDIANS, Lick Up The Day, LP
THE SWITCH, "Writing A Ways", EP
Ruling Factor Records, PO Box 294, Winooski, VT 05404

Greetings from Burlington, Vermont, Amerocka's newest pop scene...or so these 3 releases from the new Ruling Factor label would suggest. Screaming Broccoli is a pop trio with a flavorful pop/punk sound and a great cover of "Eleanor Rigby," but their lyrics suffer from a bad case of Hickitis... what passes for clever in Burlington seems pretty banal in New York. Suggestion: Bury the cute "funny" songs like "Let's Bury Bob" and "Fashion Is A Virtue" and stick with the straightahead pop moves ("Maize" is an okay tune, f'r'instance). The Hollywood Indians work in a more country/folk idiom and their humor comes from observation and experience rather than a blatant stab at yoks, kind of a maple-flavored version of Peter Stampfel's folkie/rock 'n roll style. This LP is catchy, eccentric, and good fun. The Switch's 4-song EP features white-break reggae that would be unpleasant and untuneful no matter what "scene" they came from.

- J.T.

UNDERDOG

Danny - Guitar
Russ - Bass
Carl - Vocals
Dean - Drums



UNDERDOG!



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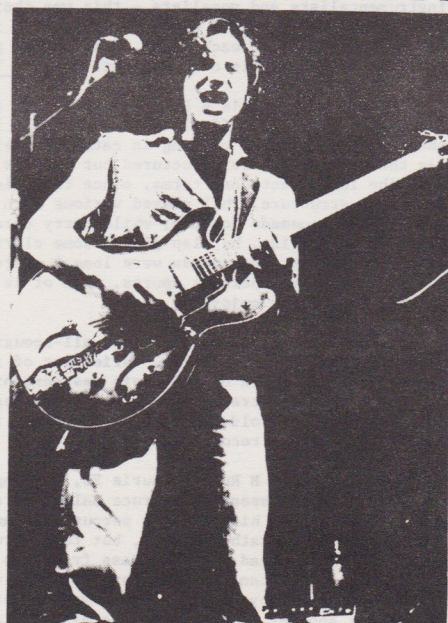


Stu Archer - vocals
John Ford - guitar
John Garrecht - bass
Dean Igley - drums

**SUBURBAN
BOHEMIA**

**ALTERNATIVE
MUSIC FEST. 6**

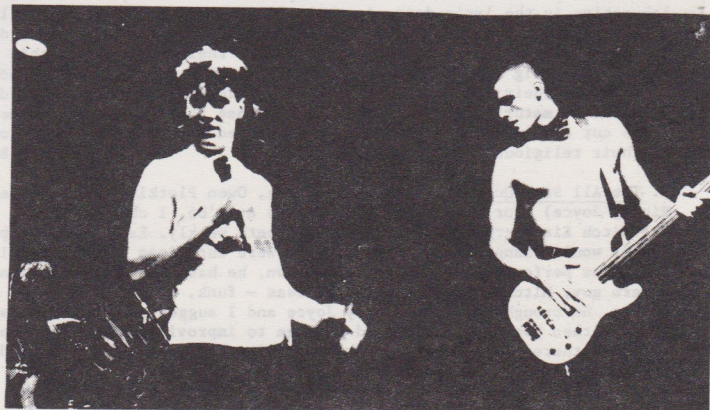
**Distraction
Boys**



Distraction Boys (above), White Plastic, CB6B Anti-Censorship Benefit April, 1987 - Photos by Bri Hurley



SPLATCATS



White Plastic



**Gorilla
Biscuits**

**Ve
it!**

ALTERNATIVE MUSIC FESTIVAL #6 - 'The Art Of The Improvisers'
March 8, Court Tavern, New Brunswick, NJ

This was the 6th fest I've put together in about 3 years, but it was the first (& not the last) at the Court Tavern. This fest was different from the others - the theme was not noise or psychedelia or folk... the unifying spirit was one of free improvisation from various perspectives. Some of the more interesting jazz and rock units from our area have provided us with some amazing instrumentalists and vocalists - this was their chance to play free of the usual structures of songs. Seven units performed in seven hours, with a dinner break thrown in. Each unit was intriguing in their own way, with the small but dedicated audience holding on to each sound. Most of the people stayed for the entire trip. My good buddy, Paul Decolator, reviewed most of the Fest in his own publication, Free TNT, and did such a good job that some of it is excerpted below:

1. **Untitled '87:** (Larry Pittis & Phil Woodruff) Two average-looking guys playing some near-volatile stuff. They ended Bruce's 1st fest with a loose jam & members of the audience sitting in cathartic release of chaos & freedom. Today their set was more structured but just as compelling. They are hard to describe in conventional terms, since there is no bass, drums, or conventional song structure. Phil played various horn parts, vacuum cleaner hoses, and assorted homemade devices, while Larry carefully abused his el. guitar as it lay on his lap, he also played some clarinet. They both doubled on typewriters. At times, the sounds were long & mysterious, while at other points they came in short, painful spurts. All of it worked. They were unpretentious and thoroughly enjoyable. (PD)

2. **Dos Equis:** (Bear & Scott Robertson) This all-acoustic percussion duo once again provided us with their positive, varied set of int'l sounds & instruments. The skeletal structure of all music was personified by them through a series of rituals and illustrations of life with a beat, an entire language of percussive sounds to behold. They recently opened for Suzanne Vega before a large crowd at Rutgers - recognition is in store. (BG)

3. **Suburban Bohemia:** (Rock N Rollo, Laurie Es, Wailing Mike, Roger Johansen, and Steve Extreme) SB is essentially Bruce Gallanter's pet noise-ensemble - mainly it is a vehicle for his poetry & percussive (hubcaps) ideas. In the past, SB has tended to be rather sedate, but today Bruce had assembled a rather aggressive unit with the lead guitar & bass from NJ's Wassermann Love Puddle. This time, they burned. I can honestly say that this was the best SB line-up. Their sound was propelled by Laurie's hard, yet conventional bass-playing with Roger's sax adding another dimension to the already-layered sound. It was a tense sound that SB produced and I'm sure that it shocked many of the folks who attended the Fest. (PD)

4. **Thee Mopeds** (Owen Plotkin & The Monz) The Mopes played a short but nonetheless incredible set that provided their diehard fans enough of their psychotic eruption until next time. Two of these 3 tunes were new - will wonders never cease?!? "Hey Monz" is the Mopes' 1st collaboration in the lyric dept. in their 10-year history. They actually have to sing difficult harmony to pull this one off, and they sure did it right! (It looks as if they will release their first vinyl this Summer.) The big news is/was their new and still evolving epic, "Cool." It's one of their finest moments, a masterpiece of folk/rock psychedelia. The Monz is maturing into a master of suspense and of extremes, some notes cut & twist like a knife. They concluded with a smokin' version of their religious theme tune, "Acid Punks." (BG)

5. **The All Star Quartet:** (Mitch Eisenberg, Owen Plotkin, Andrew Weiss, Rickey Joyce) For 3-month periods in '85 and '86, I checked out my old pal Mitch Eisenberg's jazz gigs in Elizabeth weekly. Each week the personnel would change and each week there were surprises in store. Half of the tunes performed here were Mitch's own, he has some gems. Being a modern guy, Mitch throws in diverse ideas - funk, blues, & assorted rock things. He brought drummer Rickey Joyce and I suggested Andrew Weiss (Gone), then Owen Plotkin jumped onstage to improvise vocals and they went out there! Pure magic for two long pieces, everyone was stunned & smiling. Each player listening closely & becoming part of the flow, Andrew & Rickey playing around & effortlessly altering the rhythms, while Mitch pulled off superb hot jazz/rock solos - even Owen went the distance with his bizarre yodeling, vocal sounds, and he came up with a classic line - "Sex is taboo now that you've been tested positive." (BG)

6. **The Dissipated Orchestral Nightmare:** (Ben Face, Mitch Hiller, Ted Sputnik, Bill Millkowski, Steve Buchanan, Steve X. Dream, The Monz) These nuts jam with mixed personnel & mixed results more often than anyone I know. I even sit in often, but not this show. Some complained that their insanity was painfully loud, and it was. Even with cotton in my ears, I was blown away by their mutant onslaught of noise thick as porridge. Occasionally, ideas made their way thru the chaos. It was almost jazz, almost blues, not quite funk... When alto sax wonder Steve Buchanan stepped in midset, he blew the roof off & forced the band (and audience) into hyperdrive. (BG)

7. **Scornfritters:** (Joe Z, Steve Buchanan, Andrew Weiss, and Sim Cain) As has become a custom with my fests, another scheduled unit, Scornflakes, decided to go into limbo just before the gig. Their always-amazing rhythm team came in with a friend on guitar and Steve Buchanan was primed as well. And once again the unexpected turned into the adventurous. Andrew & Sim know each other so well that a strong foundation was always there; they improvise structure... While Steve's echoed alto sax growled, smeared, stretched out notes beyond their limits, it centered the hurricane of sound. Joe Z also added his swirling circular guitar riffs in & around the beat & the fury. Parts reminded me of the haunting dark spiritual beauty of the early Mahavishnu Orchestra. The tightest & most unified set of the day, they even came back to their first theme towards the end. Totally astounding, nothing less. A perfect way to end the day.

Once again, this was a musically successful festival, with many surprises & chances taken. The spirit of improvisation lives on. I would like to make this an annual event, so get in touch if you have something to offer. Very special thanks to Terry Hughes for sound throughout, to Chris Burke for the opportunity of using the Court, Michael Bellan for flyer design, to Stu Sporn for videotaping, Paul Decolator for on-the-spot reporting, and esp. to the handful of devoted listeners who sat through as much as was humanly possible. Events like this give me faith in the magic of music.

- BRUCE LEE GALLANTER

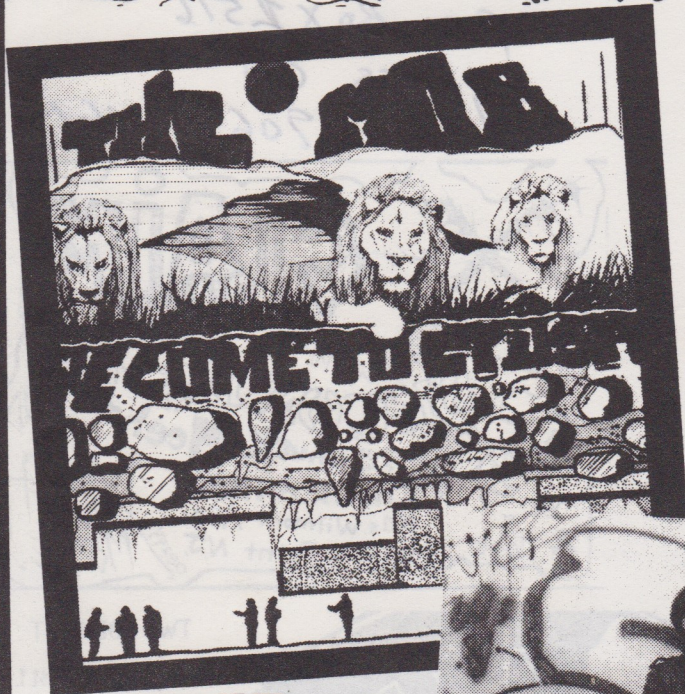


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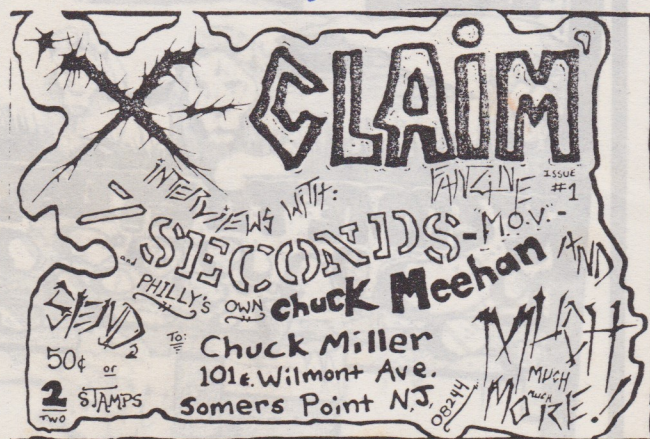
the exposed



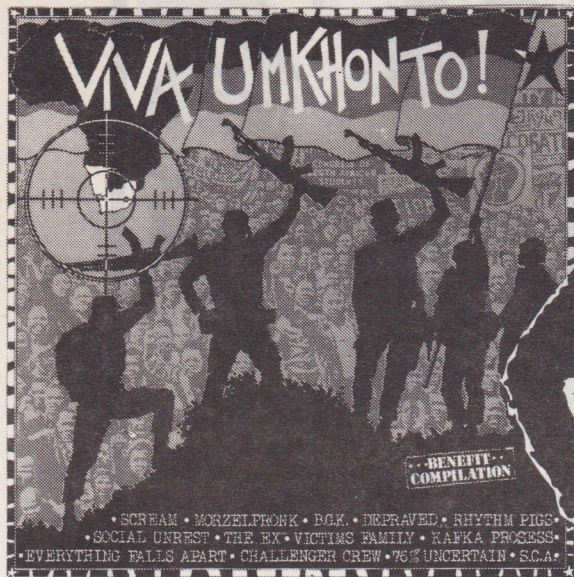
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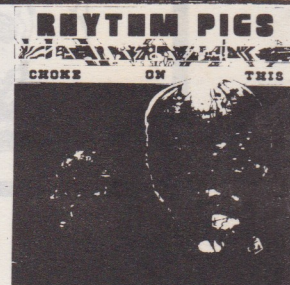
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